

## SENATOR LINDSAY PRESIDING

SENATOR LINDSAY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Hall, to open on the bill.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, LB 397, as stated by the Clerk was one of two proposals that was introduced dealing with the issue of the Athletic Commissioner. There was a competing proposal that was introduced by the Appropriations Committee that would have done away with the office of the Athletic Commissioner. What LB 397 does is move the office over to the Department of Revenue under the Charitable Gaming Division for purposes of regulation of various athletic events. The purpose behind 397, although I understand the rationale behind the Appropriations Committee's approach, was that the office itself should not be general funded and that makes sense. The move is going to be to increase the Cash Funds, the licenses, rather the certificates required to put on an event for purposes of being licensed to participate in some of these professional events and that, in itself, should take care of the needs of the agency as it has been, but only in this case it will be under the Department of Revenue Charitable Gaming. The funding will come out of that source. The rationale behind keeping the Athletic Commissioner's office in place is simply this. What it does is it provides a uniform system, a uniform approach toward regulation of these kinds of events. To wipe out the Athletic Commissioner's office altogether and to basically say to the counties, you regulate these kinds of events, is going to have a patchwork quilt approach, if you will, to how an amateur, as well as a professional, for example, boxing match may be conducted. And I don't think that it is anyone's thought that we should go back to the days where you have the traveling circus and the professional fights on any and all corners and you end up with some folks that get injured along the way. Without having some regulation in place, without having it uniform to all 93 counties, without having it stem from the Athletic Commissioner's office, I think you run the risk of that, at least in the worse case scenario. What we do here with the Athletic Commissioner is continue to provide that oversight, continue to provide that uniformity through the regulations. We just move it over to the Department of Revenue Charitable Gaming and make sure that the costs of those will be paid out of the future increase in the fees and licenses required to participate or put on these kinds of events and also